

## The Independent Institute

## Interview

Do Freedom of Information Act Files Prove FDR Had Foreknowledge of Pearl Harbor?

By [Robert B. Stinnett](#), [Douglas Cirignano](#) | Posted: Mon. March 11, 2002

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### An Interview with Robert B. Stinnett by Douglas Cirignano

On November 25, 1941 Japan's Admiral Yamamoto sent a radio message to the group of Japanese warships that would attack Pearl Harbor on December 7. Newly released naval records prove that from November 17 to 25 the United States Navy intercepted eighty-three messages that Yamamoto sent to his carriers. Part of the November 25 message read: "...the task force, keeping its movements strictly secret and maintaining close guard against submarines and aircraft, shall advance into Hawaiian waters, and upon the very opening of hostilities shall attack the main force of the United States fleet in Hawaii and deal it a mortal blow..."

One might wonder if the theory that President Franklin Roosevelt had a foreknowledge of the Pearl Harbor attack would have been alluded to in this summer's movie, *Pearl Harbor*. Since World War II many people have suspected that Washington knew the attack was coming. When Thomas Dewey was running for president against Roosevelt in 1944 he found out about America's ability to intercept Japan's radio messages, and thought this knowledge would enable him to defeat the popular FDR. In the fall of that year, Dewey planned a series of speeches charging FDR with foreknowledge of the attack. Ultimately, General George Marshall, then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, persuaded Dewey not to make the speeches. Japan's naval leaders did not realize America had cracked their codes, and Dewey's speeches could have sacrificed America's code-breaking advantage. So, Dewey said nothing, and in November FDR was elected president for the fourth time.

Now, though, according to Robert Stinnett, author of Simon & Schuster's [Day Of Deceit](#), we have the proof. Stinnett's book is dedicated to Congressman John Moss, the author of America's Freedom of Information Act. According to Stinnett, the answers to the mysteries of Pearl Harbor can be found in the extraordinary number of documents he was able to attain through Freedom of Information Act requests. Cable after cable of decryptions, scores of military messages that America was intercepting, clearly showed that Japanese ships were preparing for war and heading straight for Hawaii. Stinnett, an author, journalist, and World War II veteran, spent sixteen years delving into the National Archives. He poured over more than 200,000 documents, and conducted dozens of interviews. This meticulous research led Stinnett to a firmly held conclusion: FDR knew.

"Your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign wars," was Roosevelt's famous campaign statement of 1940. He wasn't being ingenuous. FDR's military and State Department leaders were agreeing that a victorious Nazi Germany would threaten the national security of the United States. In White House meetings the strong feeling was that America needed a call to action. This is not what the public wanted, though. Eighty to ninety percent of the American people wanted nothing to do with Europe's war. So, according to Stinnett, Roosevelt provoked Japan to attack us, let it happen at Pearl Harbor, and thus galvanized the country to war. Many who came into contact with Roosevelt during that time hinted that FDR wasn't being forthright about his intentions in Europe. After the attack, on the Sunday evening of December 7, 1941, Roosevelt had a brief meeting in the White House with Edward R. Murrow, the famed journalist, and William Donovan, the founder of the Office of Strategic Services. Later Donovan told an assistant that he believed FDR welcomed the attack and didn't seem surprised. The only thing Roosevelt seemed to care about, Donovan felt, was if the public would now support a declaration of war. According to [Day Of Deceit](#), in October 1940 FDR adopted a specific strategy to incite Japan to commit an overt act of war. Part of the strategy was to move America's Pacific fleet out of California and anchor it in Pearl Harbor. Admiral James Richardson, the commander of the Pacific fleet, strongly opposed keeping the ships in

harm's way in Hawaii. He expressed this to Roosevelt, and so the President relieved him of his command. Later Richardson quoted Roosevelt as saying: "Sooner or later the Japanese will commit an overt act against the United States and the nation will be willing to enter the war."

To those who believe that government conspiracies can't possibly happen, *Day Of Deceit* could prove to them otherwise. Stinnett's well-documented book makes a convincing case that the highest officials of the government—including the highest official—fooled and deceived millions of Americans about one of the most important days in the history of the country. It now has to be considered one of the most definitive—if not the definitive—book on the subject. Gore Vidal has said, "...Robert Stinnett has come up with most of the smoking guns. *Day Of Deceit* shows that the famous 'surprise' attack was no surprise to our war-minded rulers..." And John Toland, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of the Pearl Harbor book, *Infamy*, said, "Step by step, Stinnett goes through the prelude to war, using new documents to reveal the terrible secrets that have never been disclosed to the public. It is disturbing that eleven presidents, including those I admired, kept the truth from the public until Stinnett's Freedom of Information Act requests finally persuaded the Navy to release the evidence."

*What led you to write a book about Pearl Harbor?*

**Stinnett:** Well, I was in the navy in World War II. I was on an aircraft carrier. With George Bush, believe it or not.

*You wrote a book about that.*

**Stinnett:** Yes, that's right. So, we were always told that Japanese targets, the warships, were sighted by United States submarines. We were never told about breaking the Japanese codes. Okay. So, in 1982 I read a book by a Professor Prange called *At Dawn We Slept*. And in that book it said that there was a secret US Navy monitoring station at Pearl Harbor intercepting Japanese naval codes prior to December 7. Well, that was a bombshell to me. That was the first time I had heard about that. I worked at *The Oakland Tribune* at that time....So I went over to Hawaii to see the station to confirm it. And, then, to make a long story short, I met the cryptographers involved, and they steered me to other sources, documents that would support all of their information. And so that started me going. My primary purpose was to learn about the intercept procedures. And so I filed Freedom of Information Act requests with the Navy because communications intelligence is very difficult. It's a no-no. They don't want to discuss it. But the Navy did let me, gave me permission to go to Hawaii and they showed me the station....So that started me on it. And then I would ask for certain information, this is now, we're talking about in the 1980's, the late 1980's. And they're very reluctant to give me more information. I'm getting a little bit.

*Historians and government officials who claim that Washington didn't have a foreknowledge of the Pearl Harbor attack have always contended that America wasn't intercepting and hadn't cracked Japan's important military codes in the months and days preceding the attack. The crux of your book is that your research proves that is absolutely untrue. We were reading most all of Japan's radio messages. Correct?*

**Stinnett:** That is correct. And I believed that, too. You know, because, *Life* magazine in September 1945, right after Japan surrendered, suggested that this was the case, that Roosevelt engineered Pearl Harbor. But that was discarded as an anti-Roosevelt tract, and I believed it, also.

*Another claim at the heart of the Pearl Harbor surprise-attack lore is that Japan's ships kept radio silence as they approached Hawaii. That's absolutely untrue, also?*

**Stinnett:** That is correct. And this was all withheld from Congress, so nobody knew about all this.

*Until the Freedom of Information Act.*

**Stinnett:** Yes.

*Is this statement true?—If America was intercepting and decoding Japan's military messages then Washington and FDR knew that Japan was going to attack Pearl Harbor.*

**Stinnett:** Oh, absolutely.

*You feel it's as simple as that?*

**Stinnett:** That is right. And that was their plan. It was their “overt act of war” plan that I talk about in my book that President Roosevelt adopted on October 7, 1940.

*You write that in late November 1941 an order was sent out to all US military commanders that stated: “The United States desires that Japan commit the first overt act.” According to Secretary of War Stimson, the order came directly from President Roosevelt. Was FDR's cabinet on record for supporting this policy of provoking Japan to commit the first overt act of war?*

**Stinnett:** I don't know that he revealed it to the cabinet. He may have revealed it to Harry Hopkins, his close confidant, but there's no evidence that anybody in the cabinet knew about this.

*I thought you wrote in your book that they did...That some of them were on record for...*

**Stinnett:** Well, some did. Secretary of War Stimson knew, based on his diary, and also probably Frank Knox, the Secretary of Navy knew. But Frank Knox died before the investigation started. So all we have really is Stimson, his diary. And he reveals a lot in there, and I do cite it in my book...You must mean his war cabinet. Yes. Stimson's diary reveals that nine people in the war cabinet—the military people—knew about the provocation policy.

*Even though Roosevelt made contrary statements to the public, didn't he and his advisors feel that America was eventually going to have to get into the war?*

**Stinnett:** That is right. Well, his statement was, “I won't send your boys to war unless we are attacked.” So then he engineered this attack—to get us into war really against Germany. But I think that was his only option. I express that in the book.

*Who was Lieutenant Commander Arthur McCollum and what was his connection to the Pearl Harbor attack?*

**Stinnett:** He worked for Naval intelligence in Washington. He also was the communications routing officer for President Roosevelt. So all these intercepts would go to Commander McCollum and then he would route them to the President. There's no question about that. He also was the author of this plan to provoke Japan into attacking us at Pearl Harbor. And he was born and raised in Japan.

*McCollum wrote this plan, this memorandum, in October 1940. It was addressed to two of Roosevelt's closest advisors. In the memo McCollum is expressing that it's inevitable that Japan and America are going to go to war, and that Nazi Germany's going to become a threat to America's security. McCollum is saying that America's going to have to get into the war. But he also says that public opinion is against that. So, McCollum then suggests eight specific things that America should do to provoke Japan to become more hostile, to attack us, so that the public would be behind a war effort. And because he was born and raised in Japan, he understood the Japanese mentality and how the Japanese would react.*

**Stinnett:** Yes. Exactly.

*Has the existence of this memo from Commander McCollum ever been revealed to the public before your book came out?*

**Stinnett:** No, no. I received that as pursuant to my FOIA request on January 1995 from the National Archives. I had no idea it existed.

*FDR and his military advisors knew that if McCollum's eight actions were implemented—things like keeping the Pacific fleet in Pearl Harbor, and crippling Japan's economy with an embargo—there was no question in their minds that this would cause Japan—whose government was very militant—to attack the United States. Correct?*

**Stinnett:** That is correct, and that is what Commander McCollum said. He said, “If you adopt these policies then Japan will commit an overt act of war.”

*Is there any proof that FDR saw McCollum's memorandum?*

**Stinnett:** There's no proof that he actually saw the memorandum, but he adopted all eight of the provocations—including where he signed executive orders...And other information in Navy files offers conclusive evidence that he did see it.

*The memo is addressed to two of Roosevelt's top advisors, and you include the document where one of them is agreeing with McCollum's suggested course of action.*

**Stinnett:** Yes, Dudley Knox, who was his very close associate.

*The “splendid arrangement” was a phrase that FDR's military leaders used to describe America's situation in the Pacific. Can you explain what the “splendid arrangement” was?*

**Stinnett:** The “splendid arrangement” was the system of twenty-two monitoring stations in the Pacific that were operated by the United States, Britain, and the Dutch. These extended along the west coast of the United States, up to Alaska, then down to Southeast Asia, and into the Central Pacific.

*These radio monitoring stations allowed us to intercept and read all of Japan's messages, right?*

**Stinnett:** Absolutely. We had Japan wired for sound.

*You claim that the “splendid arrangement” was so adept that ever since the 1920's Washington always knew what Japan's government was doing. So to assert that we didn't know the Japanese were going to bomb Pearl Harbor would be illogical?*

**Stinnett:** That is correct.

*Your book claims that in 1941 Japan had a spy residing in the Japanese consulate in Honolulu.*

**Stinnett:** Japan secreted this spy—he was a Japanese naval officer—in Honolulu. He arrived there in March 1941 under an assumed name, and he was attached to the Japanese consulate there. But when the FBI checked on him they found out he was not listed in the Japanese foreign registry, so they were suspicious immediately. They put a tail on him. And then the spy started filing messages to Japan that we were intercepting. This was in a diplomatic code now. And so the FBI continued to tail him, and so did Naval intelligence.

*Naval intelligence, the FBI, and Roosevelt knew this man was spying on the fleet in Pearl Harbor, and they let the espionage go on. The policy of FDR's government then was to look the other way and let Japan prepare itself for attacking us?*

**Stinnett:** That's right. That is correct. He was providing a timetable for the attack.

*The spy was even sending bomb plots of Pearl Harbor?*

**Stinnett:** Yes. From March to August he was giving a census of the US Pacific fleet. Then starting in August he started preparing bomb plots of Pearl Harbor, where our ships were anchored and so forth.

*And Roosevelt even saw those bomb plots, right?*

**Stinnett:** Yes, that is correct.

*You claim that twice during the week of December 1 to 6 the spy indicated that Pearl Harbor would be attacked. According to a Japanese commander, the message on December 2 was: "No changes observed by afternoon of 2 December. So far they do not seem to have been alerted." And on the morning of December 6 the message was: "There are no barrage balloons up and there is an opportunity left for a surprise attack against these places." These messages were intercepted by the Navy, right? Did Roosevelt know about these messages?*

**Stinnett:** They were intercepted. That is correct. They were sent by RCA communications. And Roosevelt had sent David Sarnoff, who was head of RCA, to Honolulu so that this would facilitate getting these messages even faster. Though we were also intercepting them off the airways, anyway. And on December 2 and on December 6 the spy indicated that Pearl was going to be the target. And the December 2 message was intercepted, decoded, and translated prior to December 5. The December 6 message...there's really no proof that it was...it was intercepted, but there's all sorts of cover stories on whether or not that reached the President. But he received other information that it was going to happen the next day, anyway.

*You saw the records of those intercepts yourself?*

**Stinnett:** Yes. I have those.

*And all these other messages that the Navy was constantly intercepting showed exactly where the Japanese ships were, that they were preparing for war, and that they were heading straight for Hawaii. Right?*

**Stinnett:** That's right. Our radio direction finders located the Japanese warships.

*You say Roosevelt regularly received copies of these intercepts. How were they delivered to him?*

**Stinnett:** By Commander McCollum routing the information to him. They were prepared in monograph form. They called it monograph....it was sent to the President through Commander McCollum who dispatched it through the naval aide to the President.

*On page 203 of the hardcover edition of your book it reads, "Seven Japanese naval broadcasts intercepted between November 28 and December 6 confirmed that Japan intended to start the war and that it would begin in Pearl Harbor." Did you see the records of those intercepts yourself?*

**Stinnett:** Yes. And also we have new information about other intercepts in the current edition that's coming out in May 2001 ....There's no question about it.

*According to Day Of Deceit, on November 25 Admiral Yamamoto sent a radio message to the Japanese fleet. Part of the message read: "The task force, keeping its movements strictly secret and maintaining close guard against submarines and aircraft, shall advance into Hawaiian waters, and upon the very opening of hostilities shall attack the main force of the United States fleet in Hawaii and deal it a mortal blow..." What's the proof that the record of that intercept exists? Did you see it yourself? Again, did Roosevelt know about it?*

**Stinnett:** The English version of that message has been released by the United States, a government book. The Japanese version—the raw message—has not been released by the U.S. I have copies of the Station H radio logs—a monitoring station in Hawaii. They prove that the Navy intercepted eight-three messages that Yamamoto sent between November seventeenth and twenty-fifth. I have those records, but not the raw intercepts, eighty-six percent of which have not been released by the government...As far as Roosevelt, early in November 1941 Roosevelt ordered that Japanese raw intercepts be delivered directly to him by his naval aide, Captain Beardall. Sometimes if McCollum felt a message was particularly hot he would deliver it himself to FDR.

*Late on December 6 and in the very early morning hours of December 7 the United States intercepted messages sent to the Japanese ambassador in Washington. These messages were basically a declaration of war—Japan was saying it was breaking off negotiations with America. At those times, General Marshall and President Roosevelt were shown the intercepts. When FDR read them he said, “This means war.” When the last intercept was shown to Roosevelt it was still hours before the Pearl Harbor attack. In that last intercept Japan gave the deadline for when it was breaking off relations with the U.S.—the deadline was the exact hour when Pearl Harbor was attacked. FDR and Marshall should have then sent an emergency warning to Admiral Kimmel in Pearl Harbor. But they acted nonchalantly and didn’t get a warning to Kimmel.*

**Stinnett:** Yes. This is a message sent from the Japanese foreign office to the Japanese ambassador in Washington DC. And in it he directed....it broke off relations with the United States and set a timetable of 1:00 PM on Sunday, December 7, eastern time.

*Which was the exact time that Pearl Harbor was bombed.*

**Stinnett:** That’s right. So they realized, with all their information, this is it. And then General Marshall, though, sat on the message for about fifteen hours because he didn’t want to send...he didn’t want to warn the Hawaiian commanders in time....he didn’t want them to interfere with the overt act. Eventually they did send it but it didn’t arrive until way after the attack.

*Roosevelt saw it too. They should have sent an emergency warning to Admiral Kimmel in Hawaii, right?*

**Stinnett:** That’s right. But you see they wanted the successful overt act by Japan. It unified the American people.

*This seems like a classic case of higher-ups doing something questionable, and then getting the people below them to take the blame for it. Admiral Husband Kimmel was in charge of the fleet in Pearl Harbor, and he was demoted and took the blame for the attack. Was that justified?*

**Stinnett:** No, it was not. And Congress, you know, last October of 2000 voted to exonerate him because the information was withheld from them. That’s very important. But it was subject to implementation by President Clinton who did not sign it. But at least Congress filed it, made the finding.

*You claim that Admiral Kimmel and General Short—who headed up the army in Hawaii—were denied by Washington of the information that would have let them know the attack was coming. In what ways were Kimmel and Short denied intelligence?*

**Stinnett:** Well, they were just cut off...They were not told that the spy was there, and they were not given these crucial documents, the radio direction finder information. All this information was going to everybody but Kimmel and Short. That’s very clear.... At one point Kimmel specifically requested that Washington let him know immediately about any important developments, but they did not do that.

*Kimmel was given some information, because two weeks before the attack he sent the Pacific fleet north of*

*Hawaii on a reconnaissance exercise to look for Japanese carriers. When White House military officials learned of this what was their reaction?*

**Stinnett:** Admiral Kimmel tried a number of occasions to do something to defend Pearl Harbor. And, right, two weeks before the attack, on November 23, Kimmel sent nearly one hundred warships of the Pacific fleet to the exact site where Japan planned to launch the attack. Kimmel meant business. He was looking for the Japanese. His actions indicated that he wanted to be thoroughly prepared for action if he encountered a Japanese carrier force. When White House officials learned this, they directed to Kimmel that he was “complicating the situation” ....You see, the White House wanted a clean cut overt act of war by Japan. Isolationists would have charged FDR was precipitating Japanese action by allowing the Pacific fleet in the North Pacific...So, minutes after Kimmel got the White House directive he canceled the exercise and returned the fleet to its anchorage in Pearl Harbor...That’s where the Japanese found it on December 7, 1941.

*The White House was handcuffing Kimmel? They wanted him to be completely passive?*

**Stinnett:** That is right.

*FDR did send a war warning to Kimmel on November 28. Was that enough of a warning?*

**Stinnett:** Well, that was a warning, but also in there they directed Admiral Kimmel and all the Pacific commanders to stand aside, don’t go on the offensive, and remain in a defensive position, and let Japan commit the first overt act. That’s right in the message, and it’s in my book. And Admiral Kimmel, the message he received, it was repeated twice....stand aside and let Japan commit the first overt act, the exact wording is in my book.

*Your book makes it abundantly clear that FDR and his advisors knew Japan was preparing for war, and knew that Japan was eventually going to attack. But can it be said that FDR knew that the attack was going to take place specifically on the morning of December 7 at Pearl Harbor?*

**Stinnett:** Yes.....Absolutely.

*Through the radio intercepts.*

**Stinnett:** Through the radio intercepts. Right. Both military and diplomatic.

*Did America’s ambassador in Japan, Ambassador Joseph Grew, have any indications that Japan was planning a surprise attack on Pearl Harbor?*

**Stinnett:** The information is that he did. I do quote him in the book, and he warned Washington to be on the alert because he couldn’t give them the last minute information.

*Well, according to your book Ambassador Grew had a reliable source in the Japanese embassy tell him that Japan was planning the attack, and then Grew sent dire warnings to the White House that an attack on Hawaii was a very real possibility.*

**Stinnett:** Yes, well, he was the first one to—after President Roosevelt adopted this eight action memo—Ambassador Grew learned about the Pearl Harbor attack in January 1941. And then Commander McCollum was asked to evaluate this, and he said, “Oh, there’s nothing to it.”—even though it was his plan!

*He was being disingenuous, McCollum.*

**Stinnett:** Yea. Exactly.

*On December 5 the Navy intercepted a message telling Japanese embassies around the world to burn their code books. What does it mean when a government is telling its embassies to burn their code books?*

**Stinnett:** That means war is coming within a day or two.

*That's common knowledge in the military. And the military officials in Washington saw this intercept and the meaning of it wasn't lost on them.*

**Stinnett:** Yes. That's right.

*FDR and Washington also knew that Japan had recalled from sea all its merchant ships. What does that mean?*

**Stinnett:** It's known in government and the military that if a nation recalls its merchant ships then those ships are needed to transport soldiers and supplies for war.

*So, in your opinion, if there had been no Pearl Harbor, then would America ever have ended up dropping nuclear bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki?*

**Stinnett:** Well, that's what the survivors, the families of those who were killed at Pearl, and other people say. They claim that if there hadn't been Pearl Harbor there would have been no Hiroshima. But, of course, that's a "what if" question. And I don't know how to answer it.

*One could only speculate on that. But it seems in a way Hiroshima and Nagasaki were maybe retribution for Pearl Harbor.*

**Stinnett:** I think it was more really to bring a close to the war. You know, I was out there at the time, and, frankly, I...we were subject to kamikaze attacks, they were attacking our carriers, and about half of our carriers were knocked out as of July 1945, so, personally, I was very pleased with the atom bombing because that ended the war. It probably saved my life.

*If what you're saying is true, then Pearl Harbor is a prime example of government treating human beings like guinea pigs. Yet, you, yourself, don't disparage and don't have a negative view of FDR.*

**Stinnett:** No, I don't have a negative view. I think it was his only option to do this. And I quote the chief cryptographer for the Pacific fleet, who said, "It was a pretty cheap price to pay for unifying the country."

*That cryptographer, Commander Joseph Rochefort, was a confidant of McCollum's. He worked closely with Kimmel in Pearl Harbor. It could be argued that Rochefort was the closest one to Kimmel who was most responsible for denying Kimmel of the vital intelligence. And he did make that statement. But do you agree with that? A lot of people would be offended and angered by that statement. A lot of people wouldn't agree with it.*

**Stinnett:** A lot of people would not, but I think under the circumstances this was FDR's only option. And, of course, this was sort of used in the Viet Nam War, you know. The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution was based on a provocation aimed at the North Vietnamese gunboats—something like that. That's how President Johnson got The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution passed through the Congress. There was a provocation.

*Apparently, it's a military strategy, but the families—obviously—of the people who get killed when a military uses this strategy wouldn't agree with it.*

**Stinnett:** Oh, right. I know. Oh, when I speak about this with the families they just start crying about it, you know. They're terribly upset....But, you know, it was used by President Polk in the Mexican War in 1846. And also by President Lincoln at Fort Sumter And then also, as I say, another example is Viet Nam, this



Gulf of Tonkin business.

*It could be a traditional military philosophy, the idea that a military has to sometimes provoke the enemy to attack, sacrifice its own soldiers, so as to unify a country for war.*

**Stinnett:** I think so. I think you could probably trace it back to Caesar's time.

*How much in your book has never been revealed to the public before?*

**Stinnett:** The breaking of radio silence. The fact that the Japanese ships did not keep silent as they approached Hawaii....The breaking of Japanese codes—I mean the full proof of it. Military codes, I want to emphasize that....And also McCollum's eight action memo—that's the whole heart of my book. If I didn't have that it wouldn't be as important. That is the smoking gun of Pearl Harbor. It really is.

*Your research seems to prove that government conspiracies can exist. In your view, how many people would you say ultimately knew that Japan was going to attack Pearl Harbor, but kept quiet about it and covered it up before and after the event?*

**Stinnett:** I cite about thirty-five people there in the book that most certainly knew about it. And it's probably more than that.

*It also seems like a classic Washington cover-up. In your book you use the phrase "Pearl Harbor deceits". Ever since the attack there have been missing documents, altered documents, people being disingenuous, and people outright perjuring themselves before the Pearl Harbor investigation committees. Correct?*

**Stinnett:** That is right. Absolutely. And you know the Department of Defense has labeled some of my Pearl Harbor requests as B1 National Defense Secrets, and they will not release them. I say that in the book. Janet Reno would not release them to me.

*And all the official Congressional Pearl Harbor committees were denied and weren't privy to all this revealing information?*

**Stinnett:** That's right. They were cut out, also.

*A lot of people probably don't want to believe that a president would let something like Pearl Harbor happen. Have you gotten any criticism for contending that FDR had a foreknowledge of the attack?*

**Stinnett:** Yes. I get about a seventy percent approval rating. From, you know, comments, news media, radio, and all that. And there's about thirty percent just don't accept this....But the nitty-gritty questions are fine to me. You know, the people who are attacking me, what they are really quoting from is 1950 information. They don't have the 1999 or 2000 information....

*The information you put out in your book. You're talking about new things here.*

**Stinnett:** That's right. And this thirty percent, I feel they just don't want to accept it, or they regard FDR as an icon who brought Social Security, and all that. But he also unified this country, and we were able to stop Hitler, you know, and the holocaust, and everything else that was going on. So, you could also say that this was a victory for President Roosevelt.

*But it seems under our system of government if President Roosevelt felt it was an emergency to go to war with Germany then he should have come before the American people and the Congress and explained it and convinced us that we had to go defeat Hitler.*

**Stinnett:** Well, you see that was the problem. The strong isolation movement. Eighty percent of the people

wanted nothing to do with Europe's war. And, you know, German submarines were sinking our ships in the North Atlantic. That did not rouse the American public. Nobody gave a damn. The USS Ruben James was a destroyer that was sunk, and lost a hundred lives about a month before Pearl Harbor. And there were other ships, merchant ships, and other ships in the North Atlantic that were sunk or damaged. But no one cared about it. I think the American people thought that Roosevelt was trying to provoke us into the German war, or Europe's war. They didn't want anything to do with that. But, you see, Commander McCollum was brilliant. He fashioned this—it was a real PR job—he got Japan to attack us in a most outrageous manner that really did unite the country.

*A lot of people would probably be of the opinion that it wasn't so brilliant. The families of the three thousand people who were killed and injured at Pearl Harbor probably wouldn't think it was brilliant.*

**Stinnett:** I know, I know. You see, that's the argument today.

*But if this is true, then you agree with what FDR did?*

**Stinnett:** I do. I don't see what other option he had.

*Because a lot of the tone in your book seems to be questioning and disagreeing with Roosevelt's actions.*

**Stinnett:** Well, I disagree with the way he treated Admiral Kimmel and General Short, letting them hang out to dry.

*Kimmel and Short were cut off from the intelligence loop.*

**Stinnett:** They were cut off. And Congress, you know, last October, the Senate and the House, found that they were cut off. They made the finding. That would have never happened five years ago. Or ten, twenty years ago

*It happened because of the Freedom of Information Act?*

**Stinnett:** I think so. And the Short and Kimmel families have credited my book with getting that through Congress.

*Did you ever read Clausen's book? Colonel Henry Clausen was part of a Pearl Harbor investigation of November 1944. He wrote a book that was published in 1992 that claimed FDR didn't have a foreknowledge of the attack.*

**Stinnett:** Well, you know, I read that. But I fault Colonel Clausen because he had access to all of these military intercepts and he did not bring them out. And I think that was a crime for him to have done that. He should have been court-martialed for that.

*You infer in your book that at one point Clausen was probably trying to cover up for General Marshall's actions of December 6 and 7.*

**Stinnett:** I think so. You know, he was acting on the behalf of the Secretary of War. He had carte blanche with these intercepts.

*When was he acting on behalf of the Secretary of War?*

**Stinnett:** Well, Clausen was authorized by Secretary of War Stimson to conduct the Pearl Harbor investigation in November 1944. He traveled to the Hawaiian monitoring stations and interviewed cryptographers but failed to obtain any evidence or testimony concerning the intercepts the Navy was making prior to December 7. So when Congress opened its Pearl Harbor investigation in November 1945

there were no pre-Pearl Harbor Japanese naval intercepts available. Clausen was told by Stimson to get the intercepts, but he didn't do it.

*Did you ever talk with Clausen? Did he criticize you?*

**Stinnett:** He died. I tried to contact him. He was an attorney in San Francisco, and I did write him but he would never answer me. I wanted to ask him why he didn't obtain the intercepts. His book doesn't address that major issue. He didn't return my calls, and he never answered my letters. I guess he just didn't want to be exposed to this. Clausen was obviously a part of the conspiracy that kept the pre-Pearl Harbor intercepts from Congress and the American public.

*What kind of attention did your book get from the mainstream media? Did it get as much attention as you thought it would?*

**Stinnett:** Most of the mainstream print media has given *Day Of Deceit* very fine reviews. That includes *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, et al. Mainstream TV has not been forthcoming. The exceptions have been C-Span, PAX TV, and local television stations. Neither ABC, CBS, NBC, CNN, or Fox News have carried a word. C-SPAN carried ninety minutes of me discussing the book with a crowd of one hundred-fifty people. That was arranged by independent.org — [The Independent Institute](#), a major, progressive think tank in Oakland, California.

*Why do you think the information in your book is important?*

**Stinnett:** It's important because it reveals the lengths that some people in the American government will go to deceive the American public, and to keep this vital information—in our land of the First Amendment—from the people. And that's against everything I believe in.

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**Robert B. Stinnett** is a Research Fellow at The Independent Institute in Oakland, Calif., and the author of the book, [Day of Deceit: The Truth about FDR and Pearl Harbor](#) (Free Press). For further information, see the [Pearl Harbor Archive](#).

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